Poetry.

AS I ROCK MY BABY GIRL.

By Carrie Stevens Walter, of San Jose Grange.

O little golden head that lies
So fair upon the mother-breast!
O dewy mouth, as roses sweet,
So oft to mine in kisses pressed!

O little hands that press my cheek,
With dear caress of baby touch!
O blue-grey eyes that seek my own,
With questioning glance that means so much!

Dear restless feet! that come and go,
Indoors and out the whole day long,
To music of the lisping voice
Far sweeter to my ears than song.

I trembling glance adown the years—
Strung mist-like on the thread of fate,
That bring my winsome baby girl
Her womanhood's most fair estate.

And dread the time my sheltering arms
Can shield her precious form no more:
When she has watched, with shaded eyes,
My boat glide to the Farther Shore.

I wonder,—will the proud young head
Bend some day to a chastening rod,
While mother's folded hands,—perhaps,
Lie 'neath the violet-tufted sod?

I wonder will the bright young eyes
Grow dim and heavy with the weight
Of tears they are too proud to shed
For Life's hopes wrecked and desolate?

O little hands take up your work,
What e'er Hope grants, or Life denies!
Look bravely in the face of Fate,
And fail not, droop not, bright young eyes.

Sweet rosy mouth, with dimples crowned,
Strive not to grow too hard and stern!
Fear not to speak in cause of Right,
Or Wrong and Fraud to boldly spurn.

And maybe from the Farther Shore
A mother's love may reach to bless:
May guide and shield the wayward feet
With more than olden tenderness.

—*Golden Era.*

Correspondence.

ENSILAGE—ITS VALUE.

Dr. R. H. Lewis Makes Some Sensible and Practical Suggestions.

EDITOR PROGRESSIVE FARMER:—I respond to your note asking my experience and views on Ensilage" with pleasure, but my friends, Major Garrett and Dr. Benbow have left me very little to say other than that I fully endorse their expressions in regard to its great value and cheapness as a feeding stuff as well as the simplicity and ease of preserving it.

As you know, my professional duties are so exacting as to forbid my being anything more than an amateur farmer, and my observations therefore must be second hand and proportionately less valuable, but I will tell you what my manager and my dairyman say about it:

The former, a man of intelligence and experience in general farming, expresses it as his "positive" opinthat that it cannot be beaten. That it is not only the best but the cheapest food for cattle (have never had enough to spare any to the mules), and that he does not understand how any one can carry on, in this climate, the dairy business profitably without it. He says, further, that corn ensilage, on land located conveniently to silo and good enough to make 10 tons, can be put in the silo for 60 cents per ton, excluding only rent of land and cost of manure.

The latter, an Englishman from Lancashire, to the question, "What do you think of ensilage as a feed for cows, after using it more than a year?" replied, "I think now, sir, it is better than anything else." "How does it compare with the very best hay?" "It is better, it will make more milk and butter." "How does it compare with green forage fresh from the field?" "I think it is better, the cows eat it better and give more milk and butter." At first he was prejudiced against it and would not admit that it was as good as hay, but now, after a fair trial, this man, of reliable character, of experience in feeding cattle, recently from the green pastures of Old England—the ideal stock country—and starting out with a prejudice against it, says that ensilage is the very best feed he knows for cattle. Can the testimony of one man be stronger?

My "views on Ensilage," for the reason that I am not a farmer of practical personal experience, are probably not very valuable, but you are welcome to them, such as they are.

The "mud-sill" of successful agriculture is *manure*. The only practical method of obtaining first-class manure in quantity is by keeping stock in considerable numbers. Stock cannot be kept to advantage without an abundance of feed. The ensilage system in my opinion is the only method by which *we* can provide this necessary abundance of forage. I say we, because our lands under the clean cultivation of cotton and corn for so many years having been largely depleted of their plant food and further impoverished by the inevitable washing associated with such crops on rolling lands, are too poor to make grass, not to say anything about our long hot summers with their painfully frequent droughts. But if we could make grass easily I do not regard grazing as our best method of keeping stock—certainly not before our lands have been brought up to a high state of fertility—if then—because of the waste of manure occasioned by it; although it undoubtedly has its advantages—especially for a lazy man. So that we must depend upon the coarser forage plants, such as pea vines and fodder-corn, and the practical question for us to decide is: Shall we save them in a silo, in a small compass, in a green succulent state, a form most agreeable and appetizing to stock, and at the minimum cost: or shall we save them by curing them in the sun, in a hard and uninviting condition, frequently injured by bad weather, sometimes entirely ruined—and at greater expense and trouble—no one who has ever given both methods a trial will hesitate a moment to decide in favor of the former. Ensilage has only to be tried to win over any other system of preserving long forage for stock—especially cattle and sheep—according to my personal experience, observation and reading. Indeed, I am an enthusiastic advocate of it, believing it to be destined to revolutionize favorably our agriculture by rendering feasible the probable introduction of the stock-raising and dairy features. As soon as it comes more generally into use men will doubtless go round with ensilage cutters, as they now do with threshers, and when they do this this admirable method will be within the reach of all. It is now, however, for that matter, as it has been demonstrated especially that cutting up before barned is not essential to the proper preservation of the ensilage, though it is doubtless best. And the cost of a silo need not stand in the way of any farmer, be he ever so poor, because he can make one with his own hands without much trouble and without any outlay of cash. My last silo, constructed by hired labor, cost, complete, including shelter and sufficient sawed lumber to extend the walls above ground three feet, less than 75 cents per ton capacity.

If you will permit me to digress a little from the general subject, I would like to say before concluding, that looked at with the eyes of an amateur it strikes me that the cream of North Carolina farming remains unskimmed. I refer to raising beef in the deep, rich soils of the Albemarle section—feeding and fattening the same on the corn meal and ensilage produced on the land, supplemented by cotton seed meal, which can be conveniently obtained at Elizabeth City. Immense amounts of ensilage can be made on these lands, and the near proximity to market with cheap water transportation, it seems to me, renders it almost a certain success—and those who put in their spoons first will get the best cream and the most of it.

So much has already been said on the construction of silos that I have not gone into the subject, but if you think it worth while and wish it I will describe them at another time.

Wishing you much success in your enterprise.

Yours truly,
RICH'D H. LEWIS.

REMEDY FOR COLDS.—At this particular season of the year colds are more or less prevalent, the subjoined remedy is given, which has been pronounced infallible: Take three medium-sized lemons, boil for six or eight minutes, take up on a plate, then slice them thin with a sharp knife. Put them and their juice in to a brown earthen pan, and put over them one pound of clean brown sugar—the browner the better—and set the pan on the top of the stove, so that the sugar may melt gradually. When it is melted move the pan to a hotter part of the stove, and let it stew for about three hours. Then take it off, let it stand half an hour, and then stir into it a small tablespoonful of the oil of sweet almonds. When cold it is ready for use. Dose—a teaspoonful whenever you choose.

Farm Notes.

CORNSTALKS AND CORN.

In a good crop of corn not planted too thickly the weight of grain and cob will exceed that of fodder when both are dry. In drilled corn the reverse of this is true, mainly because corn in drills is usually too thick and there is too large a production of stalks without ears.

FERTILITY NEAR THE SURFACE.

Most crops excepting clover derive their food mainly from the first five or six inches in depth of the soil. If we can keep the surface fertile, nothing more is needed. Pulverizing the subsoil by the subsoil plow is useful mainly to enable it to hold more moisture and to open it so that roots may go down in search of it.

PRICES OF CLOVER AND GRASS SEED.

There has not as yet been much advance in price of either clover or grass seed. Those who intend to use either should lose no time in buying, as the clover-seed crop was a failure in many places at the West from which the bulk of the seed is now taken. Timothy seed has for several years been so low in price that there has been no profit in it, and its production has naturally decreased.

PLOWING SQUARE FIELDS.

If a square field is plowed around for a term of years, there will be a deep furrow extending from each corner to the centre, and a ridge against the fence on each side, into which much of the best soil has been tramped down by horses whenever planted with cultivated crops. It requires good management to get such a field into shape again, and it can only be done when the field is free from sod.

SORGHUM FODDER.

Although sorghum in its green state is excellent feed it is not adapted to using in Winter. Aside from its greater value for the production of syrup and sugar the fact that it is so full of sap makes it almost impossible to cure it dry. It will rot and spoil unless spread very thinly, while if kept in lofts, where air circulates through it, the stalks become much harder and more woody than those of corn. The stubs from sorghum make very difficult plowing in the Spring.

ROTATING MANURES FOR GARDENS.

Most gardens suffer from too little variety in the kind of manure they receive. The horse stable usually furnishes the garden manure year after year, and though this is as good as any one kind it does not always supply the elements of plant food in due proportion. For growing some vegetables other fertilizers are very beneficial, as, for example, phosphate for turnips and cabbages. The practice of some successful market gardeners is to manure heavily and change every year or two.

CLOVER IN ORCHARDS.

One of the difficulties in keeping orchards fertile is that clover, the great renovating crop, is not in the best condition for using until the trees are in full leaf, at which time plowing or otherwise breaking their roots is a serious check to their vigor. In an old orchard Summer plowing makes an end of trees which, if plowed only when they were bare and manured heavily would be productive. But with young vigorous trees Summer root pruning may be needed to induce fruitfulness. And in such cases the orchard should be seeded with clover so as to have as much to plow under as possible.

AGE OF CATTLE.

There are two ways of determining the age of cattle. In cows rings appear upon the horns which serve as a guide, though not always reliable. If a heifer calves when she is two years old the ring will come then, in which case add one to the number. If she calves at three years old, add two. No rings are found upon bulls, and if oxen have them they are very rarely seen under five years of age; hence, add five to the number. The teeth are neither to be always depended upon, as the manner of treatment and kind of feed will affect them. At birth two teeth are to be seen, and in eighteen months there is a set of broad, well-grown teeth. But from this they begin to grow narrow, and about six months later the two middles ones will drop out, when others take their places. Each following year two more will drop out until the first teeth are shed, and in this way one can generally tell the age of the animal until it is five years old, when a new set has been formed. As has been intimated, there will be some variation from this, and from six years you cannot tell absolutely by the teeth.

SOWING TIMOTHY WITH CLOVER.

Although timothy has not nearly the agricultural value of clover, it is too important a grass to be neglected, and the two should usually be sown together. If the field is intended to be kept in grass for a number of years, the timothy will hold better for having a clover growth the first season to mellow the subsoil and make the grass roots extend down farther. Besides, clover alone, if a heavy crop, is very difficult to cure. The grass has not so heavy stems as the clover and is not so full of sap. It is better to sow timothy in the Fall when it is intended to make a hay crop of it the following season. But to sow with clover, early seeding in Spring answers every purpose. The clover will keep it under the first year, so that little grass will be seen, but after this the timothy will extend and the subsequent season will occupy the entire surface.

WINTER FEED FOR HORSES.

Too many farm horses are allowed to be idle in Winter. It is true they cost less to keep while not at work, but their feed, whatever it may be, returns nothing except the manure made from it. Hence, we always advise keeping no more horses through the winter than can be profitably used. Failure to do this is the chief objection to wholesale farming. On large farms there are neceesarily many horses employed during Summer, and if these are made a bill of expense during half the year or more, it is little wonder if the Winter consumes all the profits of the year. On grain farms cut straw, with ground feed of some kind, is much more economical than the usual ration of hay and grain. Cut cornstalks kept in piles large enough to heat and moisten them may be substituted for the straw or hay. If too dry, cut cornstalks will pierce the horse's stomach, and sometimes cause fatal results.

THREE LITTERS A YEAR.

Pigs, as is well known, breed very fast, but their increase may be accelerated if the breeder understands how to manage. A sow after farrowing will come in heat and breed in four or five days after dropping a litter, and will then continue to suckle the pigs until old enough to be weaned. If the sow is not bred then she will not come in heat again until four or five days after the pigs are weaned, though this may not occur until they are eight or ten weeks old. This in most cases would make the litter come too late in the Summer for profit. A sow's period of gestation is sixteen weeks; so that by breeding as often as possible a breeder might have four litters within the fifty-two weeks in a year. But there is often an advantage in getting two litters of pigs as early as possible from the same sow. If she has farrowed in March it is possible to have another litter in July, while if the pigs were first weaned before the sow was bred the litter would be two or three months after. But this rapid breeding is very wearing to the sow. She must be well fed so long as she is suckling the first litter. She will, besides, need to have plenty of green and laxative food about the time she farrows in Summer, as a fat grain-fed sow farrowing in hot weather is likely to become sick and destroy her pigs, even if she does not herself die.

ENSILAGE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Warren Brown, of Hampton Falls, President of the New Hampshire State Agricultural Society, writes to an exchange as follows concerning the silos in his immediate vicinity, five in number, all owned by milk producers. He found all enthusiastic as to the benefits to be derived from the use of ensilage. All were keeping more stock than before adopting the new system, and were feeding no more grain than when feeding in the old way on hay. The stock was all in first-class condition. A full-grown animal consumes from one to two bushels of ensilage daily, according to the other food given. As a rule, only one feed of hay was given, in the middle of the day, and four quarts of grain, or its equivalent, was fed besides. The cows fed in this way drink but little water. The whole secret in keeping ensilage is to exclude the air and subject to heavy pressure. Mr. Brown found common field corn used for ensilage in some instances. When the kernel was glazed, the ears were broken off and left upon the ground for a number of weeks and then husked and put in the crib. He saw corn raised in this way, and it was as fine as grown by the old methods. Not over ten tons of fodder to the acre is expected when a crop of corn is harvested in this way, though twenty to twenty-five tons of fodder corn of the large Southern variety is raised to the acre. All the ensilage was found cut before putting into the silo. Putting fodder into the silo and converting into ensilage is a cheap and easy way of saving corn fodder. The nearer the fodder comes to maturity, the better will be the ensilage. For New England, the system seems likely to produce a revolution in agriculture. There is no dodging the fact, says Mr. Brown, that the silo has come to stay.